

Mr. Shugert also acted as an important liaison between government officials and area residents during the floods that devastated parts of New Jersey in 2000. More recently, he was instrumental in disseminating information during the difficult removal of the Intrepid Museum from Pier 86 in New York, for its reconstruction in Bayonne, New Jersey.

In addition, Mr. Shugert has offered his unwavering support to the Elizabeth River Arthur Kill Watershed Association Earth Day Celebration. The event teaches hundreds of students about the importance of protecting our environment.

Please join me in recognizing Peter Shugert for being the most loyal of civil servants. I congratulate him and wish him continued success in future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LEGAL EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION ACT

HON. BRAD ELLSWORTH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Legal Employee Verification Act and ask for its consideration and support. This bill overhauls the broken employment verification system we have today and replaces it with the mandatory, efficient, and transparent process our country needs.

Today, too many working men and women are denied the job opportunities they deserve because it is more convenient for some employers to go around the system and hire an illegal immigrant. Employers who break the law should be held accountable, and the Employment Eligibility Confirmation System created by this bill will make it more difficult to evade our employment regulations. At the same time, business owners who play by the rules every day can rest assured that they are competing on a level playing field.

Instead of dealing with a confusing process that often yields inconclusive results, if any, employers will quickly know the status of their prospective employees. Within as little as one day, an employer will know whether that person is eligible to work here in the United States. This efficient system will bring peace of mind to both employers and employees by giving definitive answers in reasonable periods of time.

In addition, the Legal Employee Verification Act makes use of the technology used in our nation's immigration documents.

This critical security upgrade currently helps fight identity fraud and gives security officials a new tool to protect our country from those who seek to do us harm. Now this upgrade will also discourage illegal immigrants from using falsified documents to secure jobs here, giving our law-abiding workforce a fair shot at every job available.

I don't fault people for wanting to come to live and work in America. It's a great place to live and raise a family. All I ask is that they do it legally.

Madam Speaker, it's time we get serious about enforcing our immigration and employment laws. The Legal Employee Verification Act will give us important new tools to do just that. It's common-sense policy, and I'm proud to introduce this bill for consideration.

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 2007

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, as Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing & Terrorism Risk Assessment, today I am introducing the bipartisan Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007. Ranking Member DAVE REICHERT joins me as co-author of this bill.

April 19th marks the 12th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, which claimed 168 lives and injured over 800. Only September 11, 2001, eclipses that dark day as the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil.

My own district in California has not been spared from the threat of homegrown terrorism. An episode there offers a chilling illustration of the type of domestic threat we face. In the spring of 2005, four men—three U.S. citizens and one Pakistani national residing legally in this country—finalized plans for a series of gas station robberies intended to finance terrorist attacks around Los Angeles. Their kill targets were U.S. military bases and recruiting stations, the Israeli Consulate, synagogues filled with worshippers on Jewish holy days, and the El Al ticket counter at LAX.

The indictment alleges the men were pawns of an inmate at Folsom Prison who had embraced radical Islam after being incarcerated and founded the militant prison gang "Assembly of Authentic Islam." One of them was radicalized by the inmate while doing time at Folsom; his accomplices were recruited from a local mosque and had no criminal records.

The men engaged in a spree of 11 armed gas station robberies until their arrest by local police in July 2005. A subsequent search of their apartment uncovered jihadist literature, bulletproof vests and a list of potential targets. Local police promptly contacted the FBI, which led to a major investigation involving more than 200 agents, Los Angeles police detectives, and counterterrorism officials.

The suspects now await trial, and are charged with conspiring to wage war against the U.S. government through terrorism; kill members of the Armed Forces; and murder foreign officials.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has said that "radicalization is a global problem that must be addressed through focused efforts targeting its root causes." This legislation does just that. It would establish a grant program to provide funds to the States to foster badly needed vertical information sharing down to the local level. It would create a Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Radicalization and Home Grown Terrorism to examine the social, criminal, political, psychological, and economic roots of homegrown terrorism and to propose solutions. It would require Homeland Security officials to learn from other nations that have experienced their own Oklahoma City tragedies. And, perhaps most importantly, it would ensure that our cherished civil liberties, the protections and safeguards guaranteed by our Constitution, are protected.

We urge its enactment.

FREEDOM FOR ALFREDO MANUEL PULIDO LÓPEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Dr. Alfredo Manuel Pulido López, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Dr. Pulido López is an independent journalist and a member of the Christian Liberation Movement. Before he became a human rights activist and a leader in the pro-democracy movement in a country oppressed by a totalitarian tyrant, he worked as a dentist. In 1998 he was forced from his job because of his support for democracy and the rule of law. In 2001, Dr. Pulido López joined the "El Mayor" news agency in Camagüey, Cuba to expose the despotism and corruption of the tyranny as an independent journalist. He wrote on all aspects of totalitarian Cuban society and contributed to numerous foreign press agencies because he wished to make known the true nature of the regime that enslaves Cuba.

On March 18, 2003, as part of the regime's deplorable island wide crackdown on peaceful prodemocracy activists, Dr. Pulido López was arrested because he wrote the truth about a ruthless and repressive tyranny. After a sham trial, where he was accused of "endangering independence and the state's territorial integrity" and of "writing tendentious articles on various aspects of national and provincial life," Dr. Pulido López was sentenced to 14 years in a totalitarian dungeon.

On April 18, 2006, Rebecca Rodriguez Souto, Dr. Pulido López's wife, visited her husband and was immediately alarmed by his condition and the severity his deterioration. According to a report she filed with the Committee to Protect Journalists (CJP), Dr. Pulido López is dangerously malnourished, deeply depressed, and having great difficulty breathing. Since his incarceration he has lost over 40 lbs and he finds it difficult to consume the grotesque food fed to the political prisoners. Despite his seriously declining health, Dr. Pulido Lopez continues to be caged in a totalitarian dungeon, sharing its squalor with at least 100 hardened common criminals. He has witnessed innumerable acts of violence and he must continually fear for his life.

Also fearing for her husband's life, Rebecca Rodriguez Souto has repeatedly requested that the tyranny release her husband on medical parole. She has yet to hear a response from the brutal tyrant's machinery. Dr. Pulido López himself has stated that he has no real reason to ask for medical parole since he is an innocent man to begin with, and that what the dictatorship's officials really have to give him is his freedom. To his wife he has explained that with every day he is firmer in his convictions, that he will not renounce them, and that "they (the tyranny) can do what they want."

Dr. Pulido López was arrested because of his belief in liberty. His commitment to freedom, in the face of his declining health and the regime's complete and utter disregard for human rights and dignity, is a testament to the heroism of the Cuban people. It is abominable that just 90 miles from our shores Castro's